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USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

JANUARY 1973

No. 108

CONSUMER COMMENTS INVITED

On Franks and Other Cooked Sausages. What ingredients should be permitted in hot dogs and other cooked sausages? Should by-products be banned from these products? What type of labeling is most helpful on these products? Consumers have been invited to comment on a recent USDA proposal that would help the Department decide the answers. The proposal published in the Federal Register on December 23, 1972, would ban the use of byproducts--such as lips, snouts, and spleens--from franks and other cooked sausages. Secondly, it would set up two categories of product names to indicate clearly the ingredients used. Under the first product name category, franks, bologna, and other cooked sausages could contain only muscle meat and ingredients--such as water, sweeteners, and curing agents--necessary to make these traditional products, and they would be called by their traditional names--frankfurters, bologna, etc. Products in the second name category could contain the same ingredients plus binders--such as nonfat dry milk, soy protein, etc.--and would carry a product name indicating the addition of the binders. Officials of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) point out that the proposed labeling and content changes are intended to accomplish two things. The labeling changes would bring regulations into compliance with a recent Federal court decision that the use of terms "all-meat," "all beef," and similar terms is misleading to consumers. Secondly, the proposal to ban byproducts gives USDA an opportunity to "get the issue in the open and give us a real chance to find out what the public thinks." Written comments on the proposal should be sent in duplicate by February 21 to the Hearing Clerk, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Oral comments can be made to APHIS, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in Washington, D. C., before February 21 for transcript arrangements before the deadline. Copies of the proposal are available from APHIS, USDA, Room 1658-S, Washington, D. C. 20250.

JANUARY PLENTIFUL FOODS LIST

Winter Appetite Tempters. The Plentiful Foods List for January includes the orange--fresh, frozen concentrated juice, and canned juice. Other foods listed are cranberry sauce, rice, dry beans and broiler-fryers. For February, broiler-fryers and peanuts will make up the Plentiful Foods List.



TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY

At a Glance. Good things often come in small packages. So do handy things--such as USDA's pocketsize, quick reference guide to consumer credit information. The little publication, aptly titled "Consumers' Quick Credit Guide," puts helpful credit information and pointers at your fingertips. It gives tips on buying on installment, the cost of credit, understanding percentage rates, and borrowing money along with specific things to remember and questions to ask--both of yourself and of your potential lender--before using your credit. Copies of "Consumers' Quick Credit Guide," are available for 5 cents each (cash, not credit) from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

ORANGE HO AND NECTARADE

Made From the Whole Thing. More than 600 consumers in Dallas, Tex., and Columbus, Ohio, tried them and liked them. What they tried were two experimental citrus drinks developed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The new drinks, Orange Ho (made from oranges) and Nectarade (made from grapefruit), differ from conventional citrus drinks because they are made from whole fruit purees. Only the seeds and the tough portions of the fruit are removed before grinding and homogenizing turns about 90 percent of the fruit into purees. Characteristics of pure citrus juices--such as cloudiness, pulp content, and body--are retained. Besides producing delicious, nutritious drinks acceptable to consumers, the new process offers a new way to utilize a larger percentage of the whole fruit, makes available another method for handling the ever-increasing citrus crops, and helps correct pollution problems by reducing the amount of disposable waste. Although the drinks are not available on the market yet, the taste survey--plus the other advantages of the new process--indicate a considerable commercial potential.

COMO COMPRAR LOS COMESTIBLES

Two New Booklets Added to the List. Two booklets--one on buying roast beef and one on buying canned and frozen vegetables--have been added to the growing list of Spanish language publications from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. "Como Comprar Los Asados de Carne de Vaca" (How To Buy Roast Beef) gives advice on choosing just the right roast beef for any occasion. It illustrates and explains the USDA grades for beef and the various cuts of beef that are available. In "Como Comprar Hortalizas Enlatadas y Congeladas" (How To Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables) USDA quality grades for these processed vegetables are explained and the various styles of vegetables--sliced, whole, cut, etc.--are described. Both booklets offer many other valuable tips on buying and using these foods. Single free copies of "Como Comprar Los Asados de Carne de Vaca" (G-146-S) and of "Como Comprar Hortalizas Enlatadas y Congeladas" (G-167-S) may be requested from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

TO ALL THINGS THERE IS A SEASON

Trees, For Instance. USDA has a calendar that never gets old. It is "A Calendar for Activities for Home Arborists"--or under its popular name, "Color It Green With Trees." Instead of keeping track of days of the month, the calendar gives tips and information on selecting, planting, and caring for trees for each month of the year. For example, for January, one tip says that tramping down snow around roots of young trees deters rodents from chewing on the bark; for June, a tip suggests that its time to put up stakes or guards to protect young trees from lawnmowers. Similar suggestions, tips, and other tree information offered for each month can help tree lovers set up a schedule for improvement and protection of ornamental and shade trees in their yards and communities. The attractive calendar also includes color illustrations for each month, including some of trees' worst enemies--Japanese beetles, fungi, scale--for easy identification. Copies of "Color It Green With Trees" (PA-791) are available for 20 cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

NOT TOO YOUNG TO LEARN

Getting The Things You Want. Have you ever lectured your children on achieving goals in life--time after time? If they don't seem to be getting the message, maybe there's more than a generation gap. Maybe the kids don't understand some key points in your lectures. USDA's Extension Service has come up with a slide set/filmstrip that explains "Getting The Things You Want" (C-186)--money for a new bike, learning to knit, competing for the class presidency. The presentation, developed for use in 4-H work, discusses management and explains how to put one's personal resources--such as interests, talents, time, energy, money--to work to reach a goal. Basic enough for a 9-year-old, the slide set/filmstrip is suitable for any group of youngsters about that age--Campfire Girls, Cub Scouts, elementary school classes. The 30-frame color slide set is available for \$13.00 from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. The filmstrip can be purchased for \$5.50 from Photo Lab. Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20011. A cassette carrying narration, music, and frequency pulses to change frames with automatic equipment is available for \$3.00 from either source.

FIRE RETARDANT MATTRESSES

Fewer Hot Beds. Smoking in bed has never been recommended. It has led to death, injury, and destruction by fire. However, it apparently is still being done and is still leading to fires. Working with reality, USDA scientists have developed two fire retardant treatments for mattress covers and fillers to inhibit cigarettes from igniting mattresses. One of the new treatments involves coating the back of mattress ticking with a polymer capable of dissipating heat. The coating is designed to form a shield to prevent the batting from reaching smoldering temperature--750 degrees F. The other method treats the cotton batting mattress filler with boron or phosphorus-containing compounds to make it flame- and smolder-resistant. The treatment raises the ignition temperature of the batting, changing its flaming characteristics and minimizing its tendency to smolder. Smoking in bed still is not a good idea, but if you must . . .

THE EFFECTS OF AIR POLLUTION

In Living--Or Dying--Color. If your periwinkles are perishing, it might be air pollution. But how can you tell for sure? A new USDA slide series showing the effects of air pollution on different kinds of plants--vegetables, fruits, ornamentals, trees, and field crops--can help gardeners, farmers, and homeowners diagnose the ailment and identify the pollutant. The color slides illustrate pollution damage done to plants, including closeups of leaves and fruits suffering oxidant injury. Some examples compare plants grown in filtered air to those grown in the normal air--that which we breathe. The set of 105 frames, titled "The Effects of Air Pollution on Plant Life," (A-58) is divided into three subsets: Vegetables and Fruits, Field Crops, and Ornamental Plants and Trees. The subsets sell for \$13.00 each. The complete set of 105 frames can be purchased for \$18.50. Narrative guides accompany each set and subset which may be ordered from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE

Is What You Might Have. Among the advantages of living in Alaska is that subterranean termites don't. Elsewhere--temperate or tropical--the aggressive and destructive pests consider buildings and other wood products fair and desirable game. Colonies of these social but unacceptable insects have been with us for a long time--for millions of years--so they are tough. But increased use of central heating systems, changes in building practices and materials, and development of suburban homes in forested areas, have combined to ease life somewhat for termites and they are becoming more common in areas where they formerly were of little importance. Recognizing the presence and destruction of subterranean termites is not the easiest thing to do. They usually keep to themselves, hidden away underground or in galleries they dig within the materials they attack. However, large numbers of winged reproductive termites coming out of the woodwork or ground is very good evidence of a well-established colony nearby. Before your house or your nerves become shaky, you might want to check a USDA booklet, "Subterranean Termites," for information on preventing infestations in new and old structures and on controlling infestations, should you be colonized. Single free copies of "Subterranean Termites" (G-64) are available from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

LAND SAKES

Erosion Arithmetic. Studies show that erosion on land going into use for highways, houses, or shopping centers is 10 times greater than on land in cultivated row crops, 200 times greater than on land in pasture, and 2,000 times greater than on land in timber.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Telephone (202) 447-5437.